**Blog | ** By Lofan Leung, Director of Go to Market and Alliances

Choose the Right Partner to Maximize Your Digital Transformation Strategy

Digital transformation has never been more important. In 2020, businesses in every industry accelerated their transformation strategies at a pace that none of us had anticipated. Partly driven by the pandemic's urgent needs to enable remote workforces overnight, the time to modernize shifted from 'eventually' to 'immediately' for most organizations. Taking that first real step toward digital transformation, however, can be intimidating.

At the **International SAP Conference for Utilities 2021**, running from May 18 - 20, this will be an important topic of conversation among attendees. On the second day (May 19) of the virtual event, I will join Russell Boyer, global energy field director at Dell Technologies, in leading a session with Nari Thouda, director of retail business platforms at Vistra, to share best practices on how Vistra successfully migrated mission-critical SAP workloads to the Virtustream cloud – all done fully remotely during the ongoing global pandemic. This took careful planning, expertise, a trusted partnership and sharp, strategic leadership.

A Closer Look at a Utility Customer - Vistra

Vistra is a leading, Fortune 275 integrated retail electricity and power generation company based in Irving, Texas, providing essential resources for customers, commerce and communities. The company brings its products and services to market in 20 states and the District of Columbia, including six of the seven competitive wholesale markets in the U.S. and markets in Canada and Japan, as well. Serving nearly 5 million residential, commercial, and industrial retail customers with electricity and natural gas, Vistra is the largest competitive residential electricity provider in the country and offers over 50 renewable energy plans.

Vistra had two primary objectives for its digital transformation journey: first, to reduce overall IT costs and reliance on systems integrators; second, to optimize its SAP operating model in order to offload day-to-day operations and redirect budget and resources toward more strategic, higher value innovation.

Like so many organizations, Vistra found that choosing the right platform and the right partner was the key to a successful migration. Why is this so important?

Businesses understand that adopting cloud technologies for their mission-critical workloads is essential to their IT modernization strategies. However, many enterprises lack the internal resources or skill sets necessary to successfully migrate mission-critical workloads to the cloud. It can be a complex process that may introduce significant risks. Vistra, with a sophisticated IT landscape, wanted to avoid a long and cumbersome migration project with unpredictable outcomes. To avoid this, they turned to Virtustream's professional and managed services for our proven methodologies and to help them implement a successful cloud transformation strategy – from planning and optimization to full migration and deployment.

As the trusted end-to-end cloud partner for Vistra, Virtustream simplified and personalized their journey to the cloud. We provided the technical expertise required for their mission-critical SAP systems and applications, as well as streamlined approval processes that enabled a seamless transition from migration to steady-state operations. We also created a fully tailored experience, with a specific configuration to optimize Vistra's system performance in the cloud.

One of the other important benefits of working with a managed services provider is the ability to leverage expertise in the face of unexpected challenges. For example, as part of this project, we were expecting a 10 Gbps network bandwidth. In reality, however, we experienced less network capacity, so we quickly shifted to an alternative method to overcome this limitation and still finished the project within the original timeline.

As a result of our work together, Vistra has achieved the following business outcomes:

- **Improved efficiency:** With the migration of Vistra's SAP workloads to the cloud and with Virtustream managing the entire SAP landscape, Vistra's IT staff is now able to focus on more strategic IT initiatives and more innovative digital transformation projects.

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- **Smooth migration during COVID-19 with minimum downtime:** Migrating a system that has 80TB of data across 15 SAP production instances can typically take several weeks or longer. However, even with the migration orchestrated fully remotely due to COVID-19, the project was completed in just 36 hours.

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- **Reduced costs:** Vistra estimates annual savings in the millions, which will be re-invested into the business for modernizing and future-proofing its IT environment going forward. This will allow Vistra to optimize systems and continue to meet the ever-evolving needs of its growing customer base.

If you're attending the virtual International SAP Conference for Utilities 2021 event, I hope you'll join our session to learn more. The session will take place at 7:30 a.m. Central Time (2:30 p.m. Central European Time) on May 19. More information and registration details can be found here. We hope to see you there! If you're not attending the event, but would like to learn more, you should start here.